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NEWS RELEASE

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CALAVERAS COUNTY COUPLE SENTENCED TO FOUR AND FIVE YEARS IN PRISON FOR AGGRAVATED IDENTITY THEFT

SACRAMENTO--United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that KRYSTAL LEA FREEMAN, 23, of Calaveras County, was sentenced today by United States District Judge William B. Shubb to 51 months imprisonment. Judge Shubb had sentenced co-defendant RICHARD ELIAS ESTRADA, 40, also of Calaveras County, to 65 months imprisonment on December 10, 2007. Both defendants had pleaded guilty to bank fraud, aggravated identity theft, and possession of stolen mail.

This case is the product of a joint investigation by the United States Postal Inspection Service and the Angel's Camp Police Department.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Camil A. Skipper, who prosecuted the case, as part of their guilty pleas, the defendants admitted to stealing mail and using stolen checks to make numerous purchases in San Joaquin, Sacramento, and Calaveras counties. FREEMAN also admitted applying for numerous credit cards using stolen identities and attempting to transfer \$2,500 from a victim's bank account to her own. Both FREEMAN and ESTRADA told law enforcement investigators that methamphetamine use played a part in their criminal conduct.

In sentencing FREEMAN, Judge Shubb acknowledged her remorse, but noted the seriousness of identity theft and admonished her that she had caused harm to people she did not know. He concluded his comments by acknowledging that she would "have to pay the price for that" with a sentence of 51 months

in prison. At ESTRADA's earlier sentencing hearing, Judge Shubb imposed a harsher sentence of 65 months based on ESTRADA's violent criminal history. The judge stated that a sentence at the very top of the U.S. Sentencing Commission's recommended guideline was necessary to protect the public from ESTRADA, whom the judge considered unlikely to reform.

In addition to their prison sentences, both defendants were ordered to pay restitution to the victims of their offenses. The defendants will be required to serve at least 85% of their sentences; following their release from prison, each defendant will be placed under the supervision of a parole officer for five years.

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